

instantiating an application on the client computer;

verifying that software components for the currently running program are up-to-date;

if any software component in the currently running program is not up-to-date, interrogating other installed software on the client to determine the installed versions on the client;

comparing the table of contents of software version upgrade kits to software installed on the client to determine software version upgrade kits needed to be invoked on the client to effect upgrades from a currently installed software version to a required software version;

building the software upgrade kits from the table of contents;

downloading copies of the software upgrade kits from the server to a client to be upgraded;

creating a backup of local files before applying the upgrade;

invoking an upgrade wizard to upgrade software on the client, said upgrade wizard reading a list of upgrade kit items to be performed for the software version upgrade from a driver file and a list of upgrades to be run and the state of each upgrade from a state file, and performing the upgrades; and

after upgrading the software on the client, restarting the original program that invoked the upgrade.

54. (NEW) The method of claim 53 tracking the progress of an upgrade, rolling back changes when an error occurs, instantiating the backed up local files, and restarting the upgrade from a save point.

55. (NEW) The method of claim 53 comprising monitoring the progress of a software upgrade on a client from a server.

56. (NEW) The method of claim 53 downloading one or more upgrade kits to a client before the client requires the upgrade.

57. (NEW) The method of claim 53 wherein the software being upgraded is database management software, and the upgrades further include database schema changes.

58. (NEW) A client-server computer system comprising a server computer and at least one client computer periodically docking with the server computer, said server computer including a database management system and a database thereon, and wherein said database is partially replicated from the server computer to the client computer during docking, said client-server system being configured to apply upgrades to software resident on the client computer from the server computer, said client-server computer system further being configured to:

set minimum and maximum versions of installed software for the client computer;

define contents of software version upgrade kits from the minimum and maximum versions of the installed software, the software version upgrade kits comprising files, actions, and an upgrade wizard to upgrade one or more software components from one version to another version;

write the contents of the software version upgrade kits to a database as a table of contents, said table of contents showing the contents of an upgrade kit and which software components are required by a corresponding upgrade;

instantiating a software program on the client;

verifying that software components for the currently running program are up-to-date;

if any software component in the currently running program is not up-to-date, interrogating other installed software on the client to determine the installed versions on the client;

comparing the table of contents of the software version upgrade kits to the software installed on the client computer to determine software version upgrade kits needed to be

downloaded from the server computer to the client computer and invoked on the client computer to effect upgrades from a currently installed software version to a required software version;

building the software upgrade kits from the table of contents;

downloading copies of the software upgrade kits from the server computer to the client computer;

creating on the client computer a backup of local files thereon before applying the upgrade;

invoking the upgrade wizard to upgrade software on the client, said upgrade wizard reading a list of upgrade kit items to be performed for the software version upgrade from a driver file and a list of upgrades to be run and the state of each upgrade from a state file and performing the upgrades; and

restarting the original software program that invoked the upgrade.

59. (NEW) The client-server computer system of claim 58 further configured to track the progress of an upgrade, roll back changes when an error occurs, instantiate the backed up local files, and restart the upgrade from a save point.

60. (NEW) The client-server computer system of claim 58 further configured to monitor the progress of a software upgrade on a client from a server.

61. (NEW) The client-server computer system of claim 58 further configured to download one or more upgrade kits to a client during docking and before the client requires the upgrade, and install the upgrade subsequent to docking.

62. (NEW) The client-server computer system of claim 58 further configured to apply upgrades to software resident on the client computer from the server computer and upgrade database schema resident on the client computer.